

Introduction to Ecosystems

Ecosystem

Array of organisms and their physical environment, all interacting by a flow of energy and cycling of materials

Ecology

Scientific study of how organisms interact with one another and with their physical and chemical environment

Ecologists

Scientists who study ecology

Biome

Group of ecosystems that have the same climate and similar dominant organisms; grouped geographically

Biosphere

All species and physical factors on Earth functioning as one unified ecosystem

Lithosphere

The crust and upper mantle of Earth (rock)

Hydrosphere

All of the Earth's frozen or liquid water (water)

Atmosphere

Thin layer of gases (including water vapor) separating Earth from outer space (air)

Organic

All chemical compounds that contain carbon chains

Inorganic

All chemical compounds that do NOT contain carbon chains